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satisfactory statement of their position, aim, and history. The style of the book is smooth and flowing, partaking of the grace, elegance, and sweetness, of its highly esteemed author.

HALL LAURIE CALHOUN.

LEXINGTON, KENTUCKY.

THE SHORT COURSE SERIES. Edited by Rev. JOHN ADAMS. Charles Scribner's Sons. 1913. 60 cents each.

The character and purpose of this series of little books is admirably indicated in the opening words of the general preface:

"Few preachers or congregations will face the long courses of expository lectures which characterized the preaching of the past; but there is a growing conviction on the part of some that an occasional short course, of six or eight connected studies on one definite theme, is a necessity of their mental and ministerial life. It is at this point that the projected series would strike in."

The books are suggestive and useful to overcrowded ministers.

THE GOD WE TRUST. G. A. JOHNSTON ROSS. (The Cole Lectures for 1913.) Fleming H. Revell Co. Pp. 203. \$1.25.

The title of this book is infelicitous in that it lacks characterization. It could head as well a dozen different books on religion. The chief place might fitly have been given to the sub-title—"Studies in the Devotional Use of the Apostles' Creed." This gives the reader at once the key.

It is popularly supposed that our age cares little for creeds and, for the most part, rejects them. Professor Ross has seen more deeply. He believes that one of the profound desires of our time is for a systematic view of religious truth, somewhat akin to the old-fashioned "plan of salvation." He does not attempt to set forth such a system; his aim is not directly doctrinal. But he takes the Apostles' Creed and endeavors to exhibit it as the basis for an intelligent and devout religion. To him the Creed is the embodiment of experience, facing both the facts of primitive Christian history and the life of today. He emphasizes therefore not so much the historic meaning of the different articles of the Creed nor their theology, as their value for spiritual development. Those are equally unwise who claim that the whole Creed must be held in its original significance, and those who reject it altogether. "There remains the possibility of using the Creed, if we be in general agreement with its drift, as the vehicle of an act of Faith, in which we associate ourselves with our predecessors in the Church, while we hold

ourselves free from the tyranny of words, and claim the legitimacy, when we require it, of changing the interpretation of the words of the symbol."¹

In furtherance of his aim Professor Ross interprets the "I believe in" of the Creed not as an expression of intellectual assent but as a thrice-repeated act of self-committal. "'I commit myself to God' (who is thereupon described in terms fitted to stimulate confidence); next, 'I commit myself to Jesus' (who is thereupon described in terms of selected points in character, origin, and career); finally, 'I commit myself to the Holy Ghost' (who is described in terms of certain of His operations in human society)."²

Professor Ross insists that the real meaning of any article is not the idea its words may convey to us, nor even the idea as originally expressed by its framers; but it is the thought underlying the original expression. Thus he holds that the religious worth of the phrase, "conceived by the Holy Ghost," is that "it emphasizes the responsibility of God for all that Jesus from the beginning was."³ This important canon of interpretation he applies with uniformly reverent handling and a deep insight into human experience and the Divine character; though his treatment of the different articles is not likely to be regarded as equally satisfactory.

The punctuation of the book is often poor. Capital letters (page 53) make a statement refer to Jesus which can only have reference to St. John. The essay will not satisfy one who conceives that his use of the Creed must be limited to the literal meaning of the words before him. But to one who is restless until he has grasped the underlying meaning, the book will furnish food for thought, trustworthy guidance, and the inspiration which comes in face of deep things.

FREDERIC PALMER.

HARVARD UNIVERSITY.

LIFE OF ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI. FATHER CUTHBERT, O.S.F.C. Longmans, Green, & Co. 1913. Pp. xii, 446.

Since Paul Sabatier's *Vie de S. François d'Assise* was crowned by the French Academy and awarded the Guérin prize twenty years ago, a host of Franciscan scholars—Boehmer, Goetz, Paschal Robinson, Père Alençon, Lemmons, Little, Van Ortroty, Ehrle, to mention but a few—have been at work in every nook and corner of Europe to discover the least scrap of testimony that could throw light on the life and teachings of the most popular saint of the Roman calendar. Father Cuthbert has studied the vast deposit of Fran-

¹ P. 14.

² P. 19.

³ P. 69.